CHAPTER LII

THE PETROGRAD CONFERENCE

As the previous volumes indicate, I had made repeated efforts to induce the British Government to establish more direct and authoritative contact with Russia in order to ascertain the real position in that country, and to discover what was wrong in its equipment and organisation. I had also urged the holding of Allied Conferences at which Russia should be represented by her most responsible statesmen and soldiers. That was only possible by holding these gatherings occasionally in the East. With a retreating Army important Generals could not have spared the time to visit Paris. And the Czar, with whom rested the final decision, could not have left Russia. At last, at the Paris Conference held on the *Decision to* ^*fa* and x6th November, 1916, it had *Conference* been decided that* subject to the Czar's approval, such a Conference should be held at Petrograd in time to discuss and make the final arrangements for the 1917 campaign.

The Government instructions to the Allied Delegations were to be " the united front," which included community of resources.

At the second meeting of the War Cabinet on nth December, 1916, the question was discussed of making definite arrangements for a Conference of the Allied Governments and Military Staffs to be held in Russia,